

RUE DAILY

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A 1930S KITCHEN GETS A MAJOR MAKEOVER



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For over 19 years, designer **Annette English** has been fulfilling her passion of creating beautiful spaces her clients can call home. She prides herself on bringing a vision to life – from the big picture down to the tiniest details – and helping people turn their homes into an expression of their personality and lifestyle. With a client list that includes film and music stars to high-ranking CEOs to political and cultural leaders, she always has something new and exciting on her plate. Today, we're taking a look at a recent kitchen renovation in Southern California's Holmby Hills. The space features bold materials and a unique sitting area, creating the ultimate "great room."

Hi Annette! The space is gorgeous. What can you tell us about the clients?

The clients are a young family who've lived in this Holmby Hills house for 15 years. The husband, an agent with CAA, and his wife have 3 beautiful children, 2 of whom are now in college. We did an extensive remodel for the family 10 years ago, and they hired us again for another all-encompassing remodel for this most recent iteration.

What was the condition of the kitchen at the beginning of the project?

This is a 1937 Federal-style house, and the kitchen hadn't been touched in decades. It really was the typical galley kitchen of yesteryear, and it didn't function well for today's modern family.

What were your goals with the redesign?

It started with space planning. The kitchen was surrounded by a cluster of small rooms. The clients asked us for a MAJOR reconfiguration to make the kitchen and surrounding areas the hub of the house. One of their requests was to open the dining room up to the kitchen, and we needed to merge the kitchen needs with dining needs and lounging areas to create a cohesive space where the family could congregate for a variety of activities – cooking, eating, chatting, watching TV, and lounging. The family used the dining room maybe twice a year. Since the remodel they use the dining room every day. It is so gratifying to know that we were able to enhance the functionality of their house.

Renovations always come with a hiccup or two. Did you encounter any challenges during the design process?

The hurdle was space planning. The kitchen was part of a warren of homes, including an unused, small maid's room and bath, laundry room, large storage closet and other areas that probably made sense when the home was built 80 years ago but were no longer relevant for the way families live today. We spent a lot of time thinking through the various areas and coming up with a plan for reconfiguring that part of the house and creating a great room.

The floors and tile are both so bold, but still really work well together.

I loved the materials independently of each other and even though the floor is bold, it's monochromatic which allowed the backsplash to be the star of the show. They enhance each other versus compete.

What can you tell us about the sitting room? It's so unique!

In the previous layout, the clients had a kitchen, breakfast room and formal dining room. With the new layout, we were able to combine all in one for a modern take on today's great room experience.

We love that it's nontraditional. How do you suggest readers make something like this work in their own home?

I don't think there are any rules to design and if there are, break them. As long as elements are relating to each other whether it be scale, shape, hue, style, I think it can work. And even if something is a little off, it can work if it's really thought through. Think of a play at the theatre. You can have a leading lady with a great supporting cast. Even if it's non-traditional, finding harmony amongst all the characters will typically complement.



